(c) if so, whether any laboratory test was conducted on the samples;

(d) if so, what are the findings thereof; and

(e) what will be the fate of the shipment in case it is found to be infested?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. The release of a consignment of 55,000 tonnes of U.S. wheat brought by MV 'Vitessa' at JNPT Bombay on 14-1-93 was withheld by Port Health Authorities because of their suspicion that it contained foreign matter in excess of the limit permitted under PFA Rules. On detailed sampling and analysis at Central Food Laboratory, Pune, the consignment was, however, found fully fit for human consumption and conforming to PFA standards. After having been fully satisfied with the quality, the consignment was subsequently released by the Port Authorities.

The occurence of insect infestation in foodgrain shipments under tropical and sub-tropical climatic conditions like that of our country is a common and natural phenomenon. Such consignments are fumigated with the approved fumigants at the prescribed dosage in the shipholds/transit sheds. The consignment brought by MV 'Vitessa' was also fumigated on observance of some insects and after being found fit for human consumption, the consignment has been cleared for issue for PDS.

Procurement of Wheat and Rice

2179. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE:

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) The State-wise procurement targets fixed for wheat and rice this year and the extent to which the same have been and are expected to be achieved; and

(b) the details of the comparative figures for the past three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) and (b) The procurement of wheat and paddy for the Central pool under the price support scheme being totally voluntary and the procurment of levy-rice from millers/traders being dependent on the quantum of paddy purchased by them, no targets as such can be fixed for procurement of wheat and rice.

A Statement showing State-wise quantities of wheat and rice procured during the last three marketing seasons as also in the current marketing season is given in the Annexure. [*See* Appendix CLXVI, Annexure No. 43].

Production of Sugar

2180. SHRI P. UPENDRA: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether sugar production in the 1992-93 season has substantially dropped;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps Government are taking to meet the shortage?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) The production of sugar during the current 1992-93 season (Oct.-Sept.), as on 15-2-1993, was 62.66 lakh tonnes (provisional), as against 66.73 lakh tonnes upto the corresponding date in the previous sugar season 1991-92, thereby showing a decline of 4.07 lakh tonnes.

(b) The area under sugarcane this season is reported to be less than that of last season. This could be due to a variety of factors, such as weather